

Plainfield Correctional Facility doubles as North Pole

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Santa's helper Harvey Pedro unloads presents at Danville North Elementary School. The staff of the Plainfield Correctional Facility has been honored for its toy drive (Gary Moore/The Star).

Some days, like today, Santa starts his day at a prison.

Surprisingly good things can come out of an institution at Christmas time.

Many needy families across Hendricks County are assured of gifts for their children because of the staff at the Plainfield Correctional Facility.

Harvey Pedro, costumed as the jolly old elf, guided a truck to schools in the county dropping off presents for parents to pick up and place under their trees.

Perdo, a correctional officer, distributed toys collected by the facility's staff. Vowing that no children in the county should go without Christmas, the staff has helped 3,000 kids over nine years through the toy drive.

Hendricks Regional Health has given the facility the 2006 "Treat People Better Award" for the toy drive.

The Department of Correction facility is active in community efforts.

The facility also grows fresh produce to donate to local food pantries - \$20,000 worth this year alone, according to a department news release.

Working with the Hendricks County Sheriff's Department, offenders remove litter from highways and work with schools to recycle cardboard.

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About The Department of Correction

The Department employs over 8,000 employees and houses 24,000 adult and juveniles in 32 facilities, ranging from minimum to maximum custody, prison camps, juvenile facilities and work release centers. The Department's home page on the Internet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/indcorrection>. The Department's Re-entry Site can be found: <http://www.reentry.in.gov>.